

BWSR Academy Flood Disaster Working with FEMA

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Flood Disaster

Working with FEMA

- Need to be declared a federal disaster area to obtain financial assistance
- FEMA has no alliance to nonpoint source pollution, federally impaired water listings or water quality in general.

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- Initial Assessment needs to account for time delays until repairs can be made – active erosion becomes larger over time.
- Document events and decisions well.
- FEMA/Homeland Security staff change constantly – currently 13 states have ongoing disaster relief efforts

Flood Disaster

Working with FEMA

- Be prepared to bring a new person “up to speed” several times during the process.
- Interpretations of FEMA rules and decisions vary over time and among staff.
- Control what you can control.....keep consistent messaging and communications with your local partners.

Flood Disaster

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- Get all approvals and decisions in writing. Submit plans and changes to FEMA for approval prior to hiring contractor. FEMA may not pay!
- Document why there may be differences between the approved expenditures and final construction design/quantities.
- Expect delays in reimbursement. May need to “front” the money for 1-2 years

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Time Line:

- 6/12 Flood event damages 13 sites within Dakota County's Miesville Ravine Park
- 7/12 Initial damage summary and preliminary cost estimates completed
- 8/12 FEMA Kick-off meeting – FEMA gives 60 days to complete application

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Time Line:

- 8/12 Confusing criteria – focus is on repair and replacement of public infrastructure to protect public safety
- 8/12 FEMA expects application to be final and binding – hard to do without survey and design plans
- 8/12 FEMA representative not from MN and background was in debris removal

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Time Line:

- 8/12 Application stalled – 12 of 13 projects determined ineligible for submittal. This later was overturned.
- 10/12 New FEMA staff. New staff translated the 13 sites into 3 applications – many errors and omissions during translation.
- 10/12 County receives letter from FEMA with a completion deadline of January 1, 2013

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Time Line:

- 10/12 County requests extension and receives extension until January 1, 2014.
- 11/12 Confirmation that FEMA has approved applications totaling \$287,000. No engineering or staff costs included.
- 12/12 Survey, engineering, construction plans and bid documents started.

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Time Line:

- 5/13 Work begins
- 12/13 Work completed – total costs \$361,000
- 1/14 Reimbursement requested – FEMA requests additional documentation and project information

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Time Line:

- 9/14 Reimbursement of \$281,000 received
- 10/14 County still negotiating on remaining \$6,000.



